



Chapter 7: Agency Management

Section 7.13 Tribal Relations

Resource Contact: Agency Director

Effective: 10/20/2003

References: Centennial Accord – August 4, 1989 www.goia.wa.gov
Governors Proclamation – July 21, 1997
[Indian Gaming Regulatory Act – 25 U.S.C., Chapter 29](#)
[RCW 9.46.360](#)

I. PURPOSE

To strengthen the Commission's support of a strong and principled government-to-government relationships between the agency and Washington Indian tribes consistent with the Centennial Accord and Tribal/State Gaming Compacts.

II. POLICY

1. Indian Tribes are recognized by the federal government and the state of Washington as sovereign nations. Tribal sovereignty is defined by treaties, federal statutes and executive orders of the President.

In Washington State this government-to-government relationship is further defined by the Centennial Accord Agreement adopted in 1989 and reaffirmed by Governor Locke in 1997. The core purpose of the Centennial Accord is to strengthen state relationships with federally recognized tribal governments and to promote and enhance tribal self-sufficiency.

When working with Indian tribes, commission staff should recognize and respect the sovereign status of the tribes and work as partners with them to promote the principles of the government-to-government relationship envisioned in the Centennial Accord.

2. The relationship between the state of Washington and Washington Indian Tribes on matters related to gambling is further defined by the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) and the Class III Gaming Compacts between the Tribes and the State.

The authority of the Agency regarding tribal gaming operations is not based on state law or the Washington Administrative Code. That authority is found in the Tribal/State Compacts. Those compacts govern the relationship between the agency and the tribes on all matters related to Class III gaming including regulation, licensing, enforcement and dispute resolution.

Agency staff whose duties include tribal gaming should be familiar with the relevant portions of the compacts and IGRA. The agency will provide initial and ongoing training regarding IGRA, state/tribal compacts and related court decisions.

3. Under [RCW 9.46.360](#), the Gambling Commission is responsible for negotiating Class III gaming compacts on behalf of the state with federally recognized Indian tribes. Compact negotiations are commenced by a written request from the tribe to the Governor.

Local government officials shall be kept informed regarding compact provisions including new locations, expansions and changes in impact fund distributions that may impact local government services. The Gambling Commission will encourage open communication between tribal and local officials.

4. When working with Indian Tribes, it is important to have some understanding of the history and cultures of Indian people and as well as the changes in federal policy towards Indian tribes throughout the history of our country.

Commission staff whose job duties include a significant amount of work on tribal matters shall, as part of their training requirements, complete the government-to-government training class provided by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs within six months of assuming such duties. All other Commission staff are encouraged to attend this class.

Approved:



Rick Day, Director
Washington State Gambling Commission

Date: 10/20/2003